

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL AMERICAN REPUBLIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 081164

FOLLOWING TEL SENT SECSTATE FROM USDEL ATLANTA 21 APRIL REPEATED

QTE C O N F I D E N T I A L USDEL ATLANTA 0005

SECTO 05

DEPT PLEASE PASS INFO ALL ARA DIPLOMATIC POSTS, LONDON

USDEL #1

1. BRITISH OBSERVERSHIP APPLICATION PASSED ITS FIRST HURDLE
APRIL 19 AT OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY WHEN CLOSED SESSION OF GENERAL
ASSEMBLY AND SUBSEQUENT PLENARY APPROVED INSCRIPTION OF BRITISH
OBSERVERSHIP ON ASSEMBLY AGENDA. VOTE WAS BY NARROWEST OF
MARGINS WITH APPROVAL RECEIVING BARE TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY OF
16 NATIONS, WHILE THREE VOTED NO AND FOUR ABSTAINED.

2. EFFORT TO STRIKE OBSERVERSHIP ISSUE FROM DRAFT AGENDA
OCCURRED AT CLOSED COMMITTEE SESSION WITH ARGENTINA REQUEST-
ING THAT THIS AGENDA ITEM BE VOTED ON SEPARATELY. GUATEMALA'S
CHIEF DELEGATE (PENDING ARRIVAL OF FONMIN ARENALES), AMBASSA-
DOR CASTILLO, SUPPORTED ARGENTINA. HOWEVER, THERE WAS NO DEBATE
AND VOTE WAS TAKEN QUICKLY. OPPONENTS DID NOT REPEAT EFFORT IN
PUBLIC PLENARY SESSION.

3. WHILE NO ROLL CALL WAS TAKEN, SECRETARIAT OFFICIAL THOUGHT
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THE NEGATIVE VOTES WERE HAITI, GUATEMALA AND ARGENTINA AND

THAT THE ABSTAINERS WERE BOLIVIA, PANAMA, BRAZIL AND VENEZUELA.

4. COMMENT: VOTE SURPRISED BOTH SUPPORTERS AND OPPONENTS OF BRITISH OBSERVERSHIP, SINCE GUATEMALA SEEMED TO HAVE ROUNDED UP SUFFICIENT ABSTENTIONS TO BLOCK INSCRIPTION. GUATEMALAN REPRESENTATIVE WAS INCENSED WITH SOME LATIN MINISTERS WHOM HE FELT TOLD HIM ONE THING AND VOTED THE OTHER WAY. HE EXPRESSED SOME ANNOYANCE WITH WHAT HE FELT WAS U.S. LOBBYING ON BEHALF OF BRITISH BUT MADE CLEAR THAT HE ALSO FELT WE HAD BEEN STRAIGHTFORWARD WITH GUATEMALANS ON THIS ISSUE.

5. CASTILLO PROMISED FLOOR FIGHT OVER THE SUBSTANCE -- WHICH REQUIRES MAJORITY VOTE-- AND JAMAICANS HAVE EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT, IN GLARE OF PUBLIC SESSION, GUATEMALA MAY MUSTER ENOUGH ADDITIONAL ABSTENTIONS TO DENY BRITISH OBSERVERSHIP THAT MAJORITY.

6. IN AFTERMATH OF LOSS, CASTILLO EXPRESSED "PERSONAL OPINION" THAT GUATEMALA MIGHT EVEN WALK OUT SHOULD BRITISH OBSERVERSHIP FINALLY BE APPROVED BUT ADDED THAT HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT HIS MINISTER'S ATTITUDE WOULD BE. HE SAID APPROVAL OF BRITISH OBSERVERSHIP BY OASGA MIGHT CREATE SERIOUS DOMESTIC PROBLEM FOR GUATEMALAN GOVERNMENT. SINCE ISSUE WILL LIKELY NOT BE JOINED FOR A FEW DAYS, WE WILL HAVE AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO SOUND OUT FONMIN ARENALES. IT DOES SEEM CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT GUATEMALA AND ARGENTINA WILL MAKE SIGNIFICANT ISSUE OUT OF BRITISH OBSERVERSHIP APPLICATION. KISSINGER UNQTE
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